



# The Battlefield Dispatch

## Beyond the Battlefield: Cherokee Removal and the National Military Park

*By Park Ranger Christopher Young*

What does Cherokee Removal have to do with Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park?

The majority of the present-day park was located in the Cherokee Nation, and all of the land located in Chickamauga Battlefield was part of the Georgia Land Lottery of 1832. This lottery allowed eligible settlers the chance to receive 160-acre land lots in the Cherokee Nation, while the Cherokee still lived in their homes. The land composing the current battlefield was surveyed and lots given away using the lottery system, ultimately stealing the property away from its rightful owners.

Although the lottery system only applied to Georgia, the Treaty of New Echota extended to all lands held by the Cherokee in the current national military park, including land on Lookout Mountain, Orchard Knob, and Missionary Ridge.

In 1838, Cherokee still residing in the area received an ultimatum from United States General Winfield Scott saying they had to move immediately. Thus began the roundup and forced removal of the Cherokee from their ancestral homeland.

Just south of Chickamauga Battlefield, near the town of LaFayette, Georgia,

was the location of Fort Cumming, one of the many removal forts constructed in the Cherokee Nation. Local militia and US troops used this fort to briefly detain Cherokee before moving them to Ross's Landing (Chattanooga) for removal to the West.

Once Cherokee from Fort Cumming and other surrounding areas were readied, they trudged north to Ross's Landing on the Crawfish Road, today's LaFayette Road. While driving present-day LaFayette Road, imagine how Cherokee felt as they were forced from their homes, sent to an unknown land during one of the darkest periods in American history.

In the summer of 1838, several thousand Cherokee left Ross's Landing, taking various routes to Indian Territory. Three detachments went by water and by land. Two separate groups led by Lieutenant Edward Deas and Lieutenant Robert Whiteley went by water around Moccasin Bend using steamboats and flatboats, while one group led by Captain Gustavus Drane crossed Moccasin Bend by land. Once Drane's group reached the bend's western bank, they used Brown's Ferry to cross the Tennessee River and continue their harrowing journey to the West. Could some of the Cherokee who crossed Moccasin Bend have also walked north along the Crawfish

Road, thus linking Chickamauga Battlefield and Moccasin Bend National Archeological District? In October, a final group, led by John Bell, moved across Moccasin Bend and crossed Brown's Ferry much the same way their predecessors did that summer. This group was the last of the "Treaty Party," those who supported the Treaty of New Echota.

However, the story does not end with Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. The Cherokee have proven that even through darkness, hope and survival can prevail. Today, the Cherokee have rebuilt their nation in Oklahoma.

Visitors are encouraged to drive to Moccasin Bend National Archeological District and hike the Brown's Ferry Federal Road Trace (1.2 mile round-trip). Directions can be obtained from the Chickamauga Battlefield Visitor Center, the Lookout Mountain Battlefield Visitor Center, or from [www.nps.gov/chch](http://www.nps.gov/chch).



Groups of Cherokee make their way to a riverboat and barges during Indian Removal in artwork produced by Sam Watts-Scott.

*By Superintendent Brad Bennett*

Autumn is a popular time to visit Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. Cooling temperatures and fall colors create an inviting and beautiful backdrop as we ride the roads, walk the trails, or join a ranger program. As leaves turn color and float to the ground, we are reminded of the people who have lived and died in this landscape, such as the Cherokee families forced from their homes on the Trail of Tears in the winter of 1838, and, 25 years later, the armies that clashed in two great battles in September and November, 1863.

More than a century later, as the seasons transition, we are reminded that we are a part of this never-ending cycle of change, that our nation's story continues to unfold, and that periods of destruction are followed by periods of reconstruction. As we prepare for the Centennial of the National Park Service next year, we are committed to creating new ways for you to find meaningful experiences in this place that has been protected for our collective benefit.

In October, we hosted two public meetings for the General Management Plan Amendment for Moccasin Bend National Archeological District. This master planning process will generate a new path forward in 2016 to better understand and appreciate the 12,000 years of human history preserved on this wooded peninsula cradled by the Tennessee River.

From hunter-gatherers to Civil War soldiers to all of us today, this national park has many stories to tell – and yet to tell.

## A World Turned Upside Down

*By Park Ranger Chris Barr*

From 2011 to 2015, the National Park Service commemorated the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Civil War with dozens of battle programs and memorial services.

But now we are approaching a new anniversary – the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Reconstruction. The National Park Service has commissioned a study to identify existing NPS sites that have significant Reconstruction stories as well as potentially new sites to add to the park system that would better tell the story of this significant era in American history.

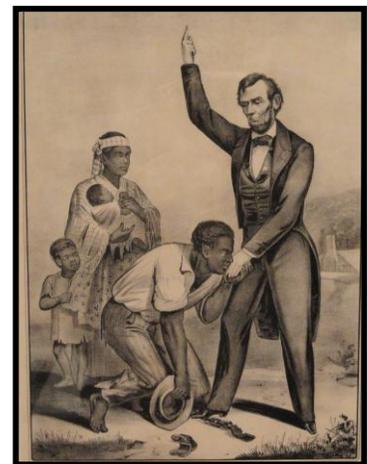
Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park is already active in telling the Reconstruction story. After the Union Army captured Chattanooga, thousands of African Americans descended on the city, but their status hung in the balance. Many of their enslavers were loyal East Tennesseans who contracted out their 'property' to the U.S. Army to build fortifications in the city. Under the terms of contracts the Army was to pay the slave owners, not the enslaved laborers. Some of these laborers worked in Chattanooga for over a year with no pay. For males in bondage around Chattanooga, another alternative existed – join the United States Colored Troops. Enlisting in the USCT offered not only emancipation for these men, but meals and lodging for both them and their families. Thousands took up this opportunity to bypass Tennessee's exemption from the Emancipation Proclamation, and a haphazard city sprung up along the north banks of the Tennessee River near present day Renaissance Park and Coolidge Park. Several regiments of USCT were raised in the city, and these men served as the garrison force once the main Union Army began its move south toward Atlanta. These black soldiers built fortifications, went on patrols, and stood guard over a city where, just a few years earlier, a black man couldn't possess a weapon. For

white citizens, the sight of armed black men patrolling their city was indicative of a world turned upside down.

In December 1865, the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment was ratified, and these men and women could legally call themselves free. The Civil War marked the beginning of the black community in Chattanooga, but their struggle was far from over. This fall, the park will partner with the Chattanooga History Center, the Bessie Smith Cultural Center, and local historians to conduct a program on the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment. The next program will take place at the Walnut Street Bridge on December 6 at 3pm.



**A soldier with the United States Colored Troops checks a civilian's pass before allowing passage in Chattanooga - Chattanooga History Center.**



**Freedom to the Slaves –Currier & Ives.**

# Volunteering at Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park in 2015

By Park Ranger Will Sunderland

Just how many people does it take to run a park? How many people are involved in keeping the visitor centers open, the buildings maintained, and the park safe?

During the last year, nearly 700 volunteers joined staff and provided over 10,000 hours of service to the national park doing all of these activities and more. Based on the national estimate for the value of a volunteer hour, taking into account the lifetime of experience brought to bear by each volunteer, volunteers contributed a value of over \$236,000.

So if you see a volunteer around the park, please take a moment to thank them—and maybe consider joining them in volunteering!



Above: Volunteer living historians portray members of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) at Camp Demaray on Lookout Mountain.



Right: NPS Volunteers clear brush from one of the hiking trails located on the slopes of Lookout Mountain.

## Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Starts Instagram Page

By Park Ranger Chris Barr

In the summer of 2015, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park created an Instagram page.

Instagram is a photo sharing social media platform that is very popular, especially with younger audiences. Currently, there are more than 300 million Instagram users worldwide, and

the park hopes to reach youth audiences both locally and around the world. Within the first two months, the park amassed more than 100 followers. Photos highlight the spectacular scenery found throughout the battlefields, special programs, and even help to recruit volunteers. Because the park is located near a large urban center, Chattanooga, Tennessee, Instagram can be a powerful tool to engage the local audience with the park in their backyard.



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

In 1863, Union and Confederate forces fought for control of Chattanooga, known as the "Gateway to the Deep South." Confederates were victorious at nearby Chickamauga in September. Renewed fighting in Chattanooga that November provided Union troops with victory and control of the city.

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



# The Church Bell Battery

By Park Historian Jim Ogdan

*Melt the bells, melt the bells,  
That for years have called to prayer,  
And, instead, the cannon's roar  
Shall resound the valleys o'er,  
That the foe may catch despair  
From the bells.*

Take a short walk on the trail that leads southward from the Ingraham's Grave parking area on Alexander's Bridge Road on the Chickamauga Battlefield. You'll come to the marker, tablet, and guns for Scogin's Georgia Battery. Officially, Scogin's Battery was the Griffin Light Artillery from Griffin, Georgia; to some, though, they were the "Church Bell Battery," earning that



**Adalbert Volck's almost satirical sketch of a pastor and congregants delivering their bells to a Confederate officer to be recast—Library of Congress.**

sobriquet because of their Rome, Georgia, Noble Brothers Foundry produced bell metal guns. Famous entreaties such as that of Confederate General P. G. T. Beauregard's "To the Planters of the Mississippi Valley"

(which prompted the Memphis *Appeal* to publish the poem *Melt The Bells* from which comes the preceding stanza) resulted in the donation of many municipal, church, and plantation bells for the Southern war effort, many of those delivered to the Empire State of the South being cast into cannon by the Noble Brothers (one of the Noble's bell metal guns can be seen in the Visitor Center at Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park). The tablet for the battery, and those for the brigade a few yards back to the north and on Brotherton Road, can be found just west of the intersection with Alexander's Bridge Road, relate their action on this ground on September 19, 1863, when the "Church Bell Battery's" cannon roar did "*resound the valleys o'er, That the foe may catch despair.*"

## Co. K

**[Poem found in pocket-book taken from General Lytle's pocket when he lay dead on the battlefield of Chickamauga]**

The Battlefield Dispatch is a quarterly publication of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

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*There's a cap in the closet,  
Old, tattered, and blue,  
Of very slight value,  
It may be to you;*

*But a crown, jewel-studded,  
Could not buy it to-day,  
With its letters of honor,  
Brave "Co. K."*

*The head that it sheltered  
Needs shelter no more!  
Dead heroes make holy  
The trifles they wore;*

*So, like chaplet of honor,  
Of laurel and bay,  
Seems the cap of the soldier,  
Marked "Co. K."*

*Bright eyes have look calmly  
Its visor beneath  
O'er the work of the Reaper,  
Grim Harvester, Death!  
Let the muster-roll, meager,  
So mournfully say,  
How foremost in danger  
Went "Co. K."*

*Whose footsteps unbroken  
Came up to the town,  
Where rampart and bastion  
Looked threat'ningly down!  
Who, closing up breaches,  
Still kept on their way,  
Till guns, downward pointed,  
Faced "Co. K."*

*Who faltered, or shivered?  
Who shunned battle-stroke?  
Whose fire was uncertain?  
Whose battle line broke?  
Go, ask it of History,  
Years from to-day,  
And the record shall tell you,  
Not "Co. K."*

*Though my darling is sleeping  
To-day with the dead,  
And daisies and clover  
Bloom over his head,  
I smile through my tears  
As I lay it away –  
That battle-worn cap,  
Lettered "Co. K."*